

5/8/17

Hello...my name is Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) and I live in Rapid City.

Thank you for these hearings. I am not a scientist, but I am a mom and a grandmother. I read quite a bit, except for twitters, and it concerns me that our current President - and - Head of the EPA, both seem more interested in supporting fossil fuel companies, rather than getting serious about climate change and protection of the environment. It makes it even harder for people within the agency to do the right thing. We can no longer write a carte blanche approval to greedy, poison polluters who have done the paper work right. *We know better now, what is your role now?*

I have been told your agency has not denied any of these permits....even though we ALL know of their toxic harm and ruin to our environment. So, I guess what I am asking you to do is to DELAY any permits until you get all of the facts. Many other people here will be talking about the scientific research that still needs to be done, *as well as tribal consultation.*

These permits do not benefit the United States. We don't need any uranium. The US has a 200 year supply. For us, it is all about protecting water. For Azarga, a foreign based conglomerate, it's all about greed. These ~~four~~ ^{new} disposal wells will make them a fortune and leave us, once again, with a possible irretrievable mess.

South Dakotans do not want to be the dumping ground for toxic waste. No amount of assurances by anyone can guarantee the safety of our precious water. I am incredulous that the EPA is also proposing to exempt the portion of the Inyan Kara Aquifer from the "Safe Drinking Water Act" which is necessary for mining

to occur there. WHY? Why would you want to make our water unsafe to make a few guys rich?

This week, you will hear testimony that our western South Dakota porous aquifers and caves are intertwined and leak into each other. In-situ mining potentially contaminates a great deal of our drinking water, as well as our top soil lands where the animals and birds get their food and water. I urge you to require the necessary research before giving any more permits. Check out the cancer rates in Edgemont and Crawford, Nebraska. Require the water testing that several organizations want to do. And remember, we are volunteers and water testing is expensive. EPA should help us with the funds.

We have been in this fight for a long time. In closing I want to submit to the record, a 2013 resolution by the City Council of Rapid City expressing GRAVE CONCERN.

Thank you again for listening. The United States does not need this and the only way we can keep our water safer, is simply to NOT ALLOW the permits.

What is the role of the EPA-



RESOLUTION NO. 2013-083

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING GRAVE CONCERN ABOUT THE IN SITU MINING OF URANIUM BY
POWERTECH IN CUSTER AND FALL RIVER COUNTIES.

WHEREAS, Powertech Uranium Corp. has submitted applications to the South Dakota Water Management Board for permits to use water from the Madison and Inyan Kara Aquifers to conduct in situ mining of uranium in Custer and Fall River Counties in the Black Hills of South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, In situ mining, or in situ recovery involves pumping solutions incorporating water from the aquifers into an ore body through wells which will then circulate through the porous rock and recovering the minerals from the ground by dissolving them and pumping the solution containing the ore to the surface where the minerals can be recovered.

WHEREAS, hearings on Powertech's water permit applications will be held by the South Dakota Water Management Board in Rapid City at the beginning of October of 2013; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rapid City obtains a majority of its drinking water from the Madison Aquifer; and

WHEREAS, the safety of the water in the Madison Aquifer is of utmost importance to the City of Rapid

City; and WHEREAS, due to the unanswered questions regarding the safety of the community's water supply, the Common Council of the City of Rapid City believes that the proposed in situ mining of uranium in the Black Hills poses an unacceptable risk to the primary source of Rapid City's drinking water.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City of Rapid City that due to the potential risk to the Madison Aquifer the City expresses grave concern about the proposed in situ mining of uranium in the Black Hills.

Dated this 19th day of August, 2013.

CITY OF RAPID CITY

s/ Sam Kooiker

ATTEST:

s/ Pauline Sumption
Finance Officer

In-situ mining will foul the water

I have worked for more than 40 years in the environmental cleanup field for industrial companies and consulting firms on many projects globally where accidental discharges — leaks and spills, etc. — have occurred and resulted in the contamination of groundwater systems.



RICHARD BELL

During my work on these various clean-up projects, pollution control agencies have typically insisted that not enough was known about how and where the ill-fated contamination was moving in the subsurface. Well after well needed to be installed in an effort to try to prove the improvability regarding subsurface fate and transport of contaminants. And it is one thing to clean up an accidental spill or other legacy environmental problems when laws governing the handling of hazardous materials were not as stringent as they are today, but it is quite another to allow a company to inject these materials into the subsurface and thereby purposely create a huge contamination problem.

The Environmental Protection Agency recently issued draft permits to Powertech/Azarga for a proposed in-situ leach (ISL) uranium mine in Custer and Fall River counties. If approved, these permits would allow the company to operate for 10 years.

ISL mining occurs in the sub-

surface, within groundwater aquifers. In this case, it would occur in the Inyan Kara aquifer and would include the injection of wastewater back into the Minnelusa aquifer. But people are using the water in these aquifers for drinking water and agricultural purposes, etc. So this is a terrible idea.

ISL mining involves the drilling of thousands of wells into the ore deposit where uranium occurs naturally in a solid state. Leaching solution is then pumped into the aquifer where it makes contact with the ore and artificially dissolves the uranium, along with many other heavy metals.

This solution is then theoretically captured and pumped to the surface for further processing. However, after naturally-occurring uranium and other heavy metals are mobilized in this fashion, it is absolutely impossible to guarantee 100 percent capture of this solution, especially given the heterogeneous conditions (different materials/layers, etc.) that exist in this area.

The interconnections make it impossible to predict with certainty how liquids are truly flowing. And this uncertainty occurs not only when the mining operation is active, but it is exacerbated at the end of operations when the mining ceases and the pumps are turned off.

The remainder of these heavy metals, including uranium, that were loosened during the ISL will then continue to flow within the aquifer. And to make matters worse, no such ISL operation has

ever been successfully cleaned up.

It is shocking that the EPA is willing to consider issuing such permits. If the shoe was on the other foot and the EPA was responsible for the cleanup rather than in the position of issuing these permits, they would be much more discerning and demanding.

If Powertech/Azarga is allowed to proceed, it is a near certainty that this facility will become a Superfund site and therefore the company should be required to place millions of dollars into a reserve account to pay for an inevitable cleanup.

So this is a terrible idea. Why would we risk our precious groundwater resource for a mining operation that is guaranteed to contaminate these aquifers in exchange for a handful of jobs and large profits made by a foreign corporation?

We should keep our water pure to support our local economy and the sustainable growth that is happening in the Black Hills. Common sense dictates that this type of uranium mining should not be allowed to proceed.

Please attend the EPA hearings on the proposed Powertech/Azarga ISL uranium mine to be held from 1 to 8 p.m. on May 8 and 9, at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel, 2111 LaCrosse St. in Rapid City.

Richard Bell is the president of Sustainable Environmental Energy Engineering, LLC in Rapid City and chairperson of Black Hills Chapter of Dakota Rural Action

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Chance to fight toxic waste in S.D.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued two draft underground injection permits for the Dewey-Burdock project near Edgemont. If obtained, the EPA permits would allow for injection mining wells in the Inyan Kara group of aquifers and disposal of treated waste fluid into the Minnelusa formation, below the Inyan Kara. An "aquifer exemption" could also be granted to exempt the mining area from the Safe Drinking Water Act. This is not EPA protection; it's EPA devastation.

No more toxic in-situ uranium mining; nor do we want western South Dakota to become a dump site for local, national and possible international toxic waste.

Please visit the Black Hills Clean Water Alliance website for more detailed information as well as dates and places for upcoming public hearings. The website also includes where you can mail or email written comments.

In Rapid City, public hearings will be from 1 to 8 p.m. on Monday, May 8, and Tuesday, May 9, at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel. Please come. Let your voice be heard. No more toxic waste in South Dakota.

Mary Jo Farrington
Rapid City